

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A process comprising
mixing an addition copolymer and an aqueous polymer dispersion to thicken said
aqueous dispersion,

wherein said addition polymer is composed of

- a) from 30 to 79.5% by weight of N-vinylpyrrolidone,
- b) from 20 to 69.5% by weight of vinyl acetate,
- c) from 0.5 to 10% ~~25%~~ by weight of a monovinyl ester of a C₄ to C₂₀ monocarboxylic acid , and
- d) from 0 to 40% by weight of a further, copolymerizable, ethylenically unsaturated compound,

and the percentages by weight in each case based on the weight of said copolymer.

2. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein c) is a monovinyl ester of a branched monocarboxylic acid having at least one tertiary or quaternary carbon atom.

3. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein c) is a monovinyl ester of a C₅ to C₁₅ monocarboxylic acid.

4. (Previously Presented) The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein c) is a monovinyl ester of a Versatic acid.

5. (Currently Amended) An aqueous polymer dispersion comprising a thickener, wherein said thickener is an addition copolymer composed of

- a) from 30 to 79.5% by weight of N-vinylpyrrolidone,
- b) from 20 to 69.5% by weight of vinyl acetate,
- c) from 0.5 to 10% 25% by weight of a monovinyl ester of a C4 to C20 monocarboxylic acid, and
- d) from 0 to 40% by weight of a further, copolymerizable, ethylenically unsaturated compound,

and the percentages by weight in each case based on the weight of said copolymer.

6. (Previously Presented) The aqueous dispersion as claimed in claim 5, which further comprises a dispersion of a free-radically polymerized polymer, a polyester or a polyurethane.

7. (Previously Presented) The aqueous dispersion as claimed in claim 6, wherein the free-radically polymerized polymer is a polymer composed of not more than 50% by weight of one or more principal monomers selected from the group consisting of C₁ to C₁₈ alkyl (meth)acrylates, vinyl esters of C₁ to C₂₀ carboxylic acids, vinylaromatic compounds having up to 20 carbon atoms, vinyl halides, nonaromatic hydrocarbons having one or two conjugated double bonds and mixtures thereof.

8. (Previously Presented) The aqueous polymer dispersion as claimed in claim 5, containing from 0.2 to 20 parts by weight of the addition copolymer per 100 parts by weight of a dispersed polymer.

9. (Currently Amended) An addition copolymer composed of
- a) from 30 to 79.5% by weight of N-vinylpyrrolidone
 - b) from 20 to 69.5% by weight of vinyl acetate
 - c) from 0.5 to 10% 25% by weight of a monovinyl ester of a branched C₄ to C₂₀ monocarboxylic acid having at least one tertiary or quaternary carbon atom
 - d) from 0 to 40% by weight of a further, copolymerizable, ethylenically unsaturated compound,
- the percentage by weight in each case being based on the said copolymer.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

The status of the claims is as follows:

Claims 1-9 are currently active.

Claims 2-4 and 6-8 were previously presented.

Claims 1, 5 and 9 are currently amended.

Claims 1, 5 and 9 are amended to include the limitation that the monovinyl ester of a C₄ to C₂₀ monocarboxylic acid is from 0.5 to 10%. Support for these amendments is found on page 2, lines 42-44 of the specification and in the original claims, therefore, the amendments do not include any new matter.